

Assessing payment adequacy: Physician services

ISSUE: In the March 2010 report, the Commission will analyze payment adequacy and updates for physician services.

KEY POINTS: We examine several factors to determine whether Medicare payments for physician services are adequate. These include beneficiary access to physician services, ambulatory care quality, private insurer rates compared to Medicare rates, and volume growth. In our analysis, we also examine how costs are likely to change in 2011 and discuss a payment update recommendation.

We also present preliminary analysis of the physician fee schedule's estimates of the time physicians spend furnishing services.

ACTION: Commissioners should review the findings in preparation for making a payment recommendation to Congress.

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